

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for transporting or storing compressed natural gas in a marine environment includes the providing of a heavy lift vessel that has a weather deck area that is bounded by forward and aft, port and starboard sides or walls that extend above the weather deck. A buoyant module is provided that contains a pipeline, the pipeline including multiple alternating straight sections and bend sections and multiple layers. The pipeline is supported at differing elevations within the module interior so that the various sections of the pipeline are preferably spaced apart to enable visual and/or remote exterior inspection (e.g. video, radar, x-ray, acoustic, or other exterior, non-destructive test) of the outer surface of the pipeline. The pipeline has a continuous bore that is piggable for internal inspections. The module can be transferred to a heavy lift vessel or can be used as flotation. The combination of heavy lift vessel and module can travel to a selected location for loading and unloading compressed natural gas. The module can be placed in a marine environment to serve as a storage facility for compressed natural gas.

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